

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 860

By Crowe

A RESOLUTION to recognize and honor Ed Snodderly,
accomplished Appalachian singer-songwriter.

WHEREAS, it is the privilege of the members of this General Assembly to recognize those Tennesseans who are wholly devoted to their craft and enrich the lives of their fellow citizens through their art; and

WHEREAS, one such individual is Ed Snodderly of Johnson City, an American Roots musician whose self-proclaimed "new hillbilly music" has garnered attention and adulation both locally and the world over; and

WHEREAS, born in Knoxville on June 21, 1952, Eddie Lynn Snodderly is the son of Willie Pearl Matheny of Monterey and Earl Douglas Snodderly of Union County; and

WHEREAS, Ed Snodderly grew up surrounded by folk, country, and bluegrass music, courtesy of his family, which included his fiddler grandfather, guitarist father, and pedal-steel-playing uncle, ready inspirations for the young man who would become a multi-instrumentalist himself; and

WHEREAS, his other influences include the sounds he found on the radio dial: rock 'n' roll, soul, pop, and, perhaps most importantly, the singer-songwriter wave that followed in the wake of the urban folk revival; and

WHEREAS, Ed Snodderly began his musical career in earnest when he moved to Boston in 1973; there, he joined a country-rock band and gained invaluable songwriting and performing experience. It was also while in Boston that he attracted the attention of Philo Records, the independent New England-based label with which he released his debut album, *Sidewalk Shoes*, in 1977; and

WHEREAS, Mr. Snodderly soon returned to his native Tennessee, in part to operate the now-legendary Down Home, a music venue located in Johnson City, which he co-founded in 1976; though he would travel to California to record in the ensuing years, he remained in the mountains of Tennessee and released his second album, *Sweet Light*, in 1980 via Cloudland Records, an independent label; and

WHEREAS, throughout the 1980s, Ed Snodderly continued to make music locally, and he also acted and performed with a Johnson City-based theater group, The Road Company; during the latter part of that decade, he formed a fortuitous partnership with fellow actor and musician Eugene Wolf, with whom he produced and co-wrote *Echoes and Postcards*, a play created for Tennessee Homecoming; the two would shortly thereafter form The Brother Boys; and

WHEREAS, The Brother Boys was at its heart a duo combining Mr. Snodderly's original songs, instrumental virtuosity, and lead vocals with Mr. Wolf's lead and harmony vocals; the duo released three acclaimed albums—*The Brother Boys*, *Plow*, and *Presley's Grocery*, the last two of which were released on the prestigious Sugar Hill label; and

WHEREAS, the duo garnered national and international attention, scoring a feature in *People* magazine, which claimed they sounded like "hillbillies whose moonshine got spiked with acid"; in 1992, they appeared as guest vocalists on dobro virtuoso Jerry Douglas's Grammy-nominated album *Slide Rule*, singing a song penned by Ed Snodderly, a bluegrass hit called "Pearlie Mae" that remained in the top five of the bluegrass charts for one year and was ranked among the most popular bluegrass hits of the 1990s, according to *Bluegrass Unlimited*; and

WHEREAS, The Brother Boys disbanded in 1998 when Mr. Wolf decided to pursue acting full time; Mr. Snodderly continued performing as a solo musician and often collaborated with other performers, including singer-songwriter Malcomb Holcombe and Johnson City-based string band The Reeltime Travelers; and

WHEREAS, Ed Snodderly has continued to nurture his passion for acting; in 1999, he landed a role in the Academy Award-nominated *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*; he has also

appeared in the film *Electric Valley* TVA and theatrical productions of *Fire on the Mountain* and Jo Carson's *Little Chicago* and *Horsepower*; and

WHEREAS, in addition to his many accomplishments in the entertainment realm, Mr. Snodderly has enjoyed a career as an instructor at East Tennessee State University, teaching dobro, guitar, and songwriting for the school's acclaimed Bluegrass, Old-Time, and Country Music program; and

WHEREAS, as a songwriter, Mr. Snodderly has been lauded for his evocative use of imagery and strong sense of place; he crafts songs that harken back to bygone days yet also speak to modern-day Appalachia, and he renders them in compelling performances honed through years of touring and performing both alone and with bands; and

WHEREAS, in 2014, Ed Snodderly was featured on *Let Us In Americana: The Music of Paul McCartney for Linda* alongside the likes of Sam Bush, Buddy Miller, Jim Lauderdale, Rodney Crowell, and the McCrary Sisters; in 2016, he appeared on *On Top of Old Smoky: New Old-Time Smoky Mountain Music*, which also featured Dolly Parton, Sheila Kay Adams, Alice Gerrard, Norman Blake, and others; and

WHEREAS, his discography includes *Brier Visions*, *The Diamond Stream*, *Little Egypt*, and *Record Shop*, and his extensive catalog of songs includes fan favorites "Basket of Singing Birds," "Satellite Shack," "Farther Than Your Eyes Can See," and "Diamond Stream"; and

WHEREAS, perhaps the most compelling testament to the profound resonance of Mr. Snodderly's timeless compositions is the Country Music Foundation's use of lyrics from "Diamond Stream," which are engraved into the wall of its Hall of Honor, one of only two such song inscriptions, the other being the legendary "Will The Circle Be Unbroken," composed by country music pioneer A.P. Carter; and

WHEREAS, throughout his many accomplishments, Mr. Snodderly has enjoyed the love and support of his children, Gaines William Douglas Snodderly and Lyra Pearl Helms; and

WHEREAS, it is fitting that we pause to honor the Tennessee troubadour Ed Snodderly, a songwriter and musician of the highest order who has brought much pride to his home state; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING, that we hereby recognize and honor Ed Snodderly for his many accomplishments.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.